Hurricane Charley and Lessons Learned

Why the Next Storm Might Not Be As Bad
Who and Where We Are

- Located in SWFL between Ft. Myers and Sarasota
- 165,000 residents
- Median Age 55.3
TARGET: TAMPA BAY

Hurricane Charley expected to come ashore late this afternoon, but path uncertain.

Winds up to 120 mph, storm surge up to 13 feet, rain up to 8 inches.

100,000 TOLD TO LEAVE: Largest evacuation in region’s history jams highways and bridges.

Residents brace for deadly storm.
Who Taught Us the Lessons?

Hurricane Charley projected path on Thursday, August 12, 2004

Radar image from NBC-2 in Ft. Myers at around 4:00 p.m. on Friday, August 13, 2004
Hurricane Charley’s wind swath through Charlotte County!
Around the Community

Typical Punta Gorda damage. More than 5,500 manufactured homes lost.

Charlotte County (Now Punta Gorda) Airport aftermath.
Commercial damage

Punta Gorda Presbyterian Church

Port Charlotte strip center
Planning for back-up EOC’s was critical, as both the airport site (1998) and Charlotte County Jail (2002) were utilized.

There were 55 of us (including my command staff) who hid out here at airport operations.
More views in and around Punta Gorda

Downtown Carwash

Car on a lift (with roofless condo behind).
Then and Now!

Professional Center in Punta Gorda (Day after Charley).

Sunloft Center that has replaced building to left.
Historic downtown Punta Gorda building.

Day after Hurricane Charley!  

Same building today.
Charlotte County lost one-third of its school buildings to Charley.

Punta Gorda Middle School after Charley.

Sallie Jones Elementary uncovered.
New Charlotte County schools!
Mitigation to allow continuing fire operations

Old Charlotte County firehouse design

New firehouse design
Even elevation is considered for those stations in Zone A. Equipment storage and quarters three feet above apparatus floor.
Additional new fire stations (built 160 mph wind load)!
Scenes

T-hangers did not far well!

Brownie (Then-FEMA Dir. Mike Brown) briefs Governor Jeb and W., while some EM guy looks on!
Charlotte Regional Medical Center Physician’s Center

Glass-clad building came apart at the seams in Charley’s winds!

New Medical Professional Building is hardened to withstand Cat. 4 storm.
Old EOC (L) was engineered steel building and former electronics manufacturer. New Public Safety (R) Building is rated at 200 mph wind loading!
We Must Never Forget!

This sculpture was dedicated on the fifth anniversary (8/13/2009) of Charley’s onslaught. It sits in Punta Gorda’s beautiful Laishley Park on Charlotte Harbor. Charley passed directly over this spot with winds of 150 mph!